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ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1914.

TEN PAGES TODAY

EVENING HERALD VOL. 2, NO. 295.

WESTERN FEDERATION SOCIALISTS? WELBORN DEFENDS COAL CONDITIONS

WELBORN IGNORANT SAYS ATTORNEY FOR THE MINE WORKERS

Too Much So to Employ 6,000 Miners, Lawyer Declares After C. F. and I. President Testifies.

ONE MAN KILLED FOR EACH 176,957 TONS

Big Operator Assumes Responsibility for Strike Breakers But Has None for Union Organization.

(By Leased Wire to Evening Herald.) Denver, Colo., Feb. 14.—One man was killed in the Colorado Fuel and Iron company's mines last year for every 176,957 tons of coal produced, according to the testimony of J. F. Welborn, president of the company, before the house strike investigating committee today. The total number killed in the twenty operating mines of the company was 17.

In 1912 twenty were killed, or one for every 175,579 tons; in 1911, twenty-two, or one for every 149,392 tons. In 1910, excluding the two great disasters at Primero and Starville, 25 men were killed, one for every 112,582 tons. The Primero and Starville disasters, Mr. Welborn testified, were the only serious explosions which had occurred in the mines of his company since he became head of the corporation in 1907. The testimony relative to fatalities came after a long series of questions by James Brewster, attorney for the United Mine Workers of America, touching Mr. Welborn's knowledge of mining statistics in America and abroad. In the course of his questioning Mr. Brewster declared he thought Mr. Welborn too ignorant to be the employer of 6,000 mine workers.

In indirect examination Welborn was asked by his attorney, Fred Harrington, whether he felt any obligation to the miners who had taken employment with the company with the understanding that they were to work under "open shop conditions." "Yes," replied the witness with emphasis. "I feel so much responsibility for them that I shall never ask them to leave our mines if they don't join a union."

"Do you feel under as much obligation to these men as you do to the United Mine Workers of America?" "I am under no obligations whatever to the United Mine Workers, and shall be under none as long as the organization retains its present methods."

Mr. Welborn's cross examination was resumed this morning. The mine company president said that his company was surprised that as many men remained in the mines as did remain when the strike was called.

"You realized that this strike would be a serious matter, did you not?" asked James Brewster, attorney for the strikers.

"Yes," replied Welborn. "And yet you would not meet the officers of the United Mine Workers for the sake of preventing this strike?"

"No." The witness was questioned at length regarding the effect of the strike, and admitted that coal production in the last months of 1913 was seriously curtailed.

"Do you think this large number of men went out on account of imaginary grievances or threats?"

"Many men left the state before the strike was called, others quit work because they believed what they were told by union agitators; large numbers were coerced by threats."

"I don't consider that any closed shop, which prevents an employer from hiring who do not belong to a union, is ever preferable to a non union shop," said Mr. Welborn, in response to a question.

Mr. Brewster asked when the operators first ordered rifles for use of the guards.

"Our first order of guns was made between September 17 and 20, five days after the first order by the United Mine Workers."

"Do you, after reflecting the proposal for a conference with the union, feel no responsibility for the tragic events which followed?" asked Brewster.

"None whatever."

Mr. Welborn, in response to further questions, denied that Judge J. G. Northcutt had represented his company politically in southern Colorado.

A long series of questions about relative fatalities in American and foreign coal mines brought the admission from the witness that he had not made a study of foreign conditions.

"Without wishing to reflect personally upon Mr. Welborn, I think he is

too ignorant to be the employer of 6,000 mine workers," said Brewster. L. A. Hayden, president of the Juniper Coal company of Routt county, was called as a witness by the committee. He told of a conversation with W. T. Hickey, secretary of the Colorado state federation of labor, in which he said he refused to sign a contract with the United Mine Workers of America. Representative Byrnes asked: "Did you tell him that if you signed the contract the Colorado Fuel and Iron company would put you out of business?" "I don't remember any such statement by myself."

"Was any one else present?"

"Mr. Serat, my manager, was present part of the time."

The witness was questioned about prices of coal in Denver, with the apparent purpose of indicating the Routt county operators were subjected to ruinous competition.

"Did you tell Mr. Hickey that if you signed with the union, the bank with which you did business would refuse to lend you money?" asked Representative Byrnes.

"I made the statement that if I did sign the contract, the bank—the Denver National bank—would be liable to refuse to lend us money. I thought this was so because an order of the bank had advised me not to sign up. He gave this advice on an occasion when I asked him for a loan of money to keep our mine running after the strike was called. He asked me if I intended to sign the union contract."

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"Yes," replied Hickey.

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"I telephoned Governor Ammons," he said, "and he asked me to secure their release. I saw John R. Lawson and he telephoned the tent colony ordering the women set at liberty."

The witness then told of his efforts to free the women, who finally, he said, were permitted to leave the colony. Attorney for the operators told the committee that the two women (a question would be put on the witness stand at Trinidad).

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